

OP-EDS

A NEW YEAR ONE FOR GOTHAM

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Norman Mailer and Jimmy Breslin had some serious fun with their mayoral campaign. Public domain.

As “the city that never sleeps” turned the calendar to 2022 with the inauguration of Eric Adams just after midnight, partygoers didn’t need Frank Sinatra’s reminder to “start spreading the news” heard on the New Year’s broadcast from Times Square. New Yorkers were well aware, as Brooklyn’s Chris Matthew Sciabarra [put it](#), that “the *best* news about the next mayor is that it won’t be Bill de Blasio.”

Few would vouch that de Blasio’s administration had lived up to Eric Alterman’s first-year [hopes](#) that the post-Bloomberg mayor would “use the power of the city government to make New York a fairer and more equal place for all its inhabitants.”

Was the relentlessness of inequality since 2014, even well before the unexpected effects of COVID, merely due to de Blasio being the wrong choice to steer “the power of the city government,” or disgraced

governor and sometime de Blasio foe Andrew Cuomo likewise mishandling state government, not the nature of government power itself?

Elections don't offer control over policies that persist no matter who is in office. Concentrated political power, rather than being a counterbalance to economic consolidation, is more likely to promote and ossify the latter far beyond market levels. Columbia University alumnus Thomas E. Woods **warned** Americans that "no matter whom you vote for [president], you always wind up getting John McCain." New Yorkers always wind up getting Rudy Giuliani.

It's not too late to revive the plan offered by Norman Mailer and Jimmy Breslin in 1969, whose mayoral campaign literature **told** New Yorkers that they "want neighborhoods to govern themselves." Since "politicians have ridden this city right into the ground," they asked for decision-making to be transferred away from them to local communities who could have "power over their schools, police, sanitation, housing, parks and life styles."

Citywide impositions of uniform policies on issues from standardized testing to indoor smoking inevitably makes them politically contentious. Decentralization would unleash the ability of voluntary groups to coordinate cooperative activities, the potential for which has expanded far beyond what was possible eight years ago, let alone 53. And it's not too late for New York City to "be a part of it."

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PUBLICATION/CITATION HISTORY

1. "A New Year One for Gotham" by Joel Schlosberg, CounterPunch, January 7, 2022
2. "A New Year One For Gotham" by Joel Schlosberg, Ventura County, California *Citizens Journal*, January 12, 2022
3. "A New Year One for Gotham" by Joel Schlosberg, Queens [New York] *Ledger*, January 12, 2022
4. "A New Year One for Gotham" by Joel Schlosberg, Forest Hills/Rego Park [New York] *Times*, January 12, 2022
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8. "A New Year One for Gotham" by Joel Schlosberg, Greenpoint [New York] *Star*, January 12, 2022
9. "A New Year One for Gotham" by Joel Schlosberg, Brooklyn [New York] *Downtown Star*, January 12, 2022
10. "A New Year One for Gotham" by Joel Schlosberg, OpEdNews, January 13, 2022